

Mayor Donnellon opened the meeting at 7:00 pm with the Pledge of Allegiance followed by the Invocation.

The clerk read the roll. Mr. Kelly, Mr. Daily, Ms. Downs, Mayor Donnellon, Mr. Camp, Mr. Feldhaus, Ms. Westmark. All members present.

Approval of Minutes

Ms. Downs motioned to approve the minutes from the September 18, 2023 Council Meeting. Mr. Feldhaus seconded the motion. Motion carried by a unanimous voice vote.

Presentations

Mayor Donnellon administered the oath to Patrolman Ryan Faehr. Welcome back Ryan! We are glad to have you back in Deer Park!

Natalie Fields – Deer Park Public Library

Ms. Fields announced that the new Deer Park Library location has been open for two years now. The Deer Park branch is the busiest location after the main branch. The library has meeting rooms, which have been opened up to be used for local organizations to provide services for nearby residents, such as job fairs, services for disabled adults, and senior services.

Public Comment – Citizens and Guests

Arvin Anadon – 1 Wentworth Lane

Mr. Anadon voiced concerns about the financial incentives that were promised by the developer to the buyers of the Wentworth Townhomes and urged the city to take ownership of the mistakes that were made.

Standing Committee Reports

Legislative and Finance Committee Chair Chris Westmark –

RESOLUTION 2023-18 RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR THE COMPENSATION OF MAYOR OF THE CITY OF DEER PARK

Ms. Westmark asked Ms. George to give the reading of Resolution 2023-18, by title only. So read. Ms. Westmark motioned for passage of Resolution 2023-18. Mr. Camp seconded the motion. Mr. Kelly – yes, Mr. Daily – yes, Ms. Downs – yes, Mayor Donnellon – abstain, Mr. Camp – yes, Mr. Feldhaus – yes, Ms. Westmark – yes. Motion carried.

Ms. Westmark motioned to accept the August 2023 JEDZ Report. Mr. Kelly seconded the motion. Motion carried by a unanimous vote.

Safety Committee Chair Tom Camp -

No report.

Public Works Committee Chair Kathy Downs –

Ms. Downs gave the following updates on Public Works projects:

- The crews are finishing up catch basin repairs.
- The crews are preparing the equipment for leaf collection.

- The water main installation on all the side streets is complete. Once the main is tested for bacteria, the residential tie-ins will be connected to the new main.
- There is no update on the Plainfield Road project from GCWW.
- The railroad will shut down the Plainfield Road crossing for repairs, date to be determined.

Park Board Committee Chair Mark Feldhaus -

Mr. Feldhaus reported the final Party in the Park was a great success. The drawing for the grand raffle and other prizes took place at the final concert.

Boo-fest is set for Saturday, October 7 from 6 – 10 p.m. Mr. Feldhaus invited Deer Park resident Jeremiah “Jay” Easton to help out with the haunted trail portion of the event, as he would be good at scaring the kids.

The Horse Races are set for Saturday, November 11 and the Tree Lighting is set for Saturday, November 25. Santa is expected to make an appearance!

Diversity & Inclusion Steering Committee – Neil Kelly

Mr. Kelly reported committee met on Thursday, September 28. The committee expects to be ready to present to council in November. The next meeting is on October 26 at 7:00 p.m. in council chambers. All are welcome.

Correspondence (Clerk of Council) & Miscellaneous –

None.

Old Business

Mr. Pacheco explained the situation with the CRA for the Wentworth Townhome development. A 100% tax exemption is not possible and unfortunately never was because of the service payment needed to fund the project. Deer Park Council does not have a say in the approval or administration of CRA applications. Ohio state law does not allow for the full 100% exemption because of the TIF that was established in conjunction with the development. Additionally, the service payments were included in the chain of title since 2021.

Mr. Brett Schatz addressed Mr. Pacheco, Dr. Jetter, Mayor Donnellon and City Council members referencing two letters that were sent to Wentworth property owners in September of this year. Mr. Schatz asked Mr. Pacheco if the 25% property tax credit was being offered as an “abatement” or an “exemption”. Mr. Pacheco took no position on the term used to describe the reduction in property taxes that is available to Wentworth property owners, but stated that the 25% is the maximum allowed, as confirmed by the Hamilton County Auditor’s office. Mr. Pacheco confirmed to Mr. Schatz that Ryan Homes was made aware that the 100% tax reduction was not available due to the TIF. Dr. Jetter explained that the TIF, which was necessary to provide the new road to serve the development, changes the terms of the CRA.

Mr. Paul Coors, Ryan Homes, noted the residential CRA application on the city’s website referenced a 100% tax abatement. Mr. Coors reviewed email correspondence between Ryan Homes and the City regarding the 100% abatement. Dr. Jetter added there were problems with the developer, which added confusion with the amount of the CRA reduction that Wentworth property owners would be eligible for.

Ms. Melynda Whitton, 39 Wentworth Lane, stated she received a letter approving her CRA application, followed by a letter that stated the CRA was not approved. Ms. Whitton is concerned about the financial impact of the reduced CRA for herself and her neighbors.

Ms. Judy Banks, 12 Wentworth Lane, reported she turned in her forms as instructed at the end of 2021, and was expecting the 100% tax reduction. Ms. Banks asked when the CRA amount changed. Mr. Pacheco explained that the CRA had to be reduced when the TIF went in place.

Ms. Lauren Pavlic, 7 Wentworth Lane, also received a letter stating her CRA was approved, followed by another letter explaining that the approved amount is 25%.

Mr. Arnav Damodhar, 15 Wentworth Lane, asked that the promise for the 100% abatement be honored.

Mr. Pacheco reiterated that the property owners are eligible for the 25% reduction, the TIF service payments were shown in the chain of title, and the reduced CRA is a state law and cannot be changed by Deer Park.

New Business

None.

Reports from Other City Officials

Solicitor –

No report.

City Manager –

- We are working with HCDC for a CEDAP grant for a gateway project at the Deer Park/Silverton border, and also at Blue Ash and Galbraith.
- Code enforcement is a potential solution to vacant properties by establishing a housing program to address vacant dwellings and absentee land owners.
- The office will close at 11:00 a.m. on Friday, October 13 for computer cabling to be upgraded.
- An economic development project was turned down because the plans called for a development that was too densely populated, it was not a mixed-use development and the school district would not agree with the tax abatement that was being requested.
- A coffee roasting/shop made an inquiry about the old movie theater on Blue Ash Road.

Mayor -

Mayor Donnellon welcomed Officer Faehr back to the Park!

Schedule

October 16, 2023 – Record Commission meeting – 5:00 p.m.

October 16, 2023 – Council Meeting – 7:00 p.m.

October 23, 2023 – Deer Park Improvement Corporation – 12:30 p.m.

November 6, 2023 – Council Meeting – 7:00 p.m.

November 7, 2023 – Election Day

November 20, 2023 – Council Meeting – 7:00 p.m.

November 23-24, 2023 – Thanksgiving holiday – Offices closed

December 4, 2023 – Council Meeting – 7:00 p.m.

December 18, 2023 – Council Meeting – 7:00 p.m.

December 25-26 – Christmas holiday – Offices closed

Community Events

October 7 – Boo Fest – 6 – 10:00 p.m.

October 17 – Block Watch – 7:00 p.m.

October 21 – CPR Training, sponsored by Block Watch – Community Center 8 a.m. – noon
November 11 – Armchair Races – Doors open at 5:00 p.m.
November 21 – Block Watch – 7:00 p.m.
November 25 – Tree Lighting – 7:00 p.m.
December 11 – Community Info Session – Library at 7:00 p.m.
December 19 – Block Watch – 7:00 p.m.

Adjournment

Mayor Donnellon motioned to adjourn. Mr. Camp seconded the motion. Motion carried by a unanimous voice vote. Meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

John Donnellon
Mayor

Meredith George
Clerk of Council